

Decision Record

EA: Central Electric Cooperative ROW to Deschutes Junction Substation

EA NUMBER: OR -056-00-120

SERIAL NUMBER: OR 55748

APPLICANT: Central Electric Cooperative (CEC)

BLM OFFICE: Prineville District
P.O. Box 550 (3050 NE 3rd St.)
Prineville, OR 97754

RESOURCE AREA: Deschutes

LOCATION: Approximately 1.5 miles northeast of Deschutes Junction at the following:
Willamette Meridian, Oregon,
T. 16 S., R. 12 E.,
Sec. 24, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.
T.16 S., R. 13 E.,
Sec. 19, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.
Containing 9.3 acres.

DECISION: It is my decision to grant a ROW to CEC for an electric transmission line that will cross public lands at the above location, which is the proposed action in the EA. The line will be 1.2 miles long and 60 feet wide. The ROW would be for a 30 year term, subject to renewal. Vegetation will be cleared in the ROW in conformance with industry standards. Soil will be extracted for the purpose of placing the footing for each tower in conformance with industry standards, then replaced after construction. The line will be a double circuit design. Construction will occur in the years 2000-01. An access road for construction, inspection, and maintenance will be permitted, which will be created through use, remain a simple two-track for the purpose of this ROW, and weave between juniper trees and other large plants.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: A no-action alternative was considered but dismissed because denial of access (1) would also deny CEC the ability to provide continuous power, which raises public safety concerns, and (2) would deny CEC use of their property, which is not permitted under FLPMA and the BLM manual.

Alternative B would have located the transmission line adjacent to Morril Road, which is an RS 2477 ROW under the jurisdiction of Deschutes County. This alternative was dismissed because of the inability to acquire easements on private lands, conflicts with county zoning ordinances, the difficulty in construction, consideration of historical structures, line and pole visibility from Highway 97, and the cost.

Alternative C would have located the transmission line approximately half a mile north of the proposed action. This alternative was dismissed because of the difficulty in obtaining private easements, difficulty to obtain a ROW from the railroad, the impracticality of construction on railroad lands, and the visibility from Highway 97 and the local area.

Alternative A was a proposal by CEC as an adaptation of Alternative C. In alternative A, CEC would be able to obtain a route to its substation. This alternative was not selected because a longer length of line would cross public lands than under the proposed action, installing the line would be more complex and costly, and the line would be visible from Highway 97 for approximately half a mile.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION: I selected the proposed action for the following reasons:

- No alternate route is available on private lands.
- The proposed action is the alternative that is least disturbing to resources except for the no action alternative, which was not selected for the reasons cited above. The proposed action would occupy the least area on public lands. It would not be visible from Highway 97. It was the least complex design and, therefore, the least disturbing to the soil and vegetation.
- The proposed action provides for public safety by providing for a complete electrical circuit, which reduces the possibility of power outages from downed lines.
- The proposed action most benefits CEC. It is the least complex and shortest design; consequently, it is the simplest to construct and least cost. It will relieve the burden on the Hix, Tumalo, and Bend substations, which are in excess of 80% loaded.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Brother/La Pine Resource Management Plan (RMP), 1989.

No public comments were received about this project.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING: The site will be inspected before, during, after construction by the authorized office or their designee. Compliance inspections will occur during regular intervals in conjunction with the general area or line inspections by BLM singularly or jointly with representatives of CEC.

TERMS / CONDITIONS / STIPULATIONS: Metal poles will be used, which will reduce the need for maintenance activities after installation.

Poles are pre-constructed to the national standard for raptor safety.

The access road will be a user created two track, not constructed, and limited to the minimum width necessary to complete the project and provide for maintenance.

The access road and other areas where vegetation is cleared will be seeded. The seed will be distributed at 10 pounds/acre, mixed as follows: 40% western wheatgrass, 30% bluebunch wheatgrass, and 30% bottlebrush squirreltail.

/s/ Marci Todd
Marci Todd,
Acting Deschutes Field Manager

11/21/00
Date